

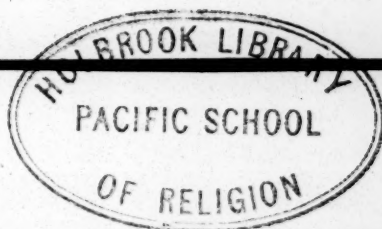
Envelope Series

FALL
1952

A QUARTERLY

Vol. LV

No. 3



STEWARDSHIP ISSUE

Presented by Frank L. Edwards

PRACTICAL PLANS FOR LOCAL CHURCHES

Suggested by Ten Congregational
Christian Church Leaders

A MAGAZINE FOR
The Missionary Education Committee of Your Church

E N V E L O P E S E R I E S

Issued by
The Committee on Missionary Education in the Local Church of the
Missions Council of Congregational Christian Churches
Editor: Ruth Isabel Seabury, Educational Secretary

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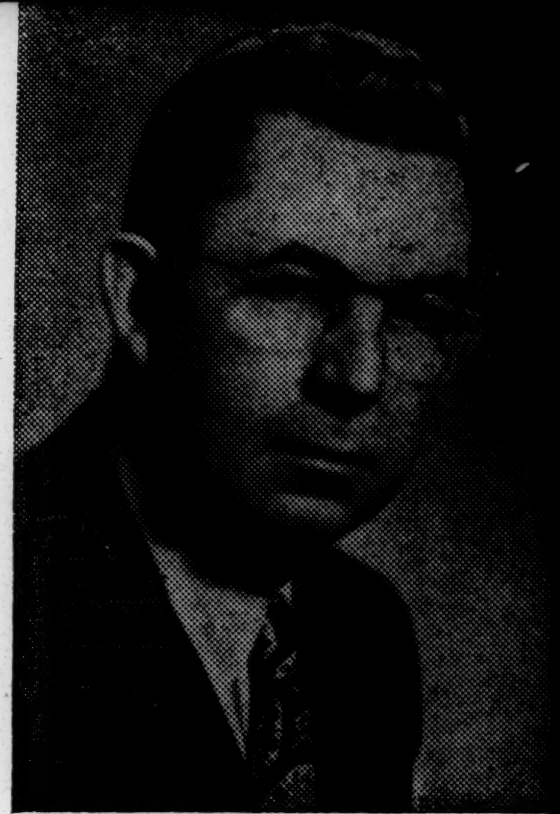
INTRODUCING A FRIEND

A Word From the Editor

This is not the first time ENVELOPE SERIES has had a special issue. It is the first time that we have invited one person to appear as special guest and to compile the entire issue. Your editor is glad to introduce Rev. Frank Edwards, National Stewardship Secretary under the Missions Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and in charge of the Chicago office where he represents all the concerns of the Mission forces of our denomination.

Frank Edwards has had twenty-three years as a pastor serving churches in Connecticut, Illinois and New York. He is pretty much of an ecumenical churchman for he was born in the United Brethren parsonage, was a Methodist during his student days in Denver University and Iliff Graduate School of Theology, he became a Congregationalist upon graduation from seminary and was ordained by the Springfield Association of Congregational Christian Churches in Illinois. Mr. Edwards has his M.A. from Yale Divinity School and STM from Union. For the years 1929 and 1930 he was awarded the Elizabeth Iliff Warren traveling fellowship.

In 1948 he left the pastorate at the urgent invitation of the New York Congregational Christian State Conference to become its Minister of Stewardship. His present work is a kind of extension on a national scale of his very successful leadership given to that conference. Not long ago Mr. Edwards wrote what we consider is a very fine hymn of Stewardship. His modesty demanded that we leave it out of this number, but your editor



overruled him and we are glad to offer for your use the hymn on page 7. Rev. Baldwin Callahan, Secretary of Missions and Stewardship for the Massachusetts Conference, wrote the music.

RUTH ISABEL SEABURY

Boston, Massachusetts
September 1.

LETTER FROM OUR GUEST EDITOR

DEAR READER:

Here is an entire issue of ENVELOPE SERIES on Stewardship. We hope it will reach you in time to be of help in planning your program for 1952 and 1953. Each article is written from the experience of its writer and you will find many good suggestions for the work of your committee.

We have tried to arrange the articles in the most useful way possible. Mr. Sandstrom's "Ten Pointers" would make a good docket for the first fall meeting of the Stewardship Committee. Don Bundy of Plymouth Church, Milwaukee, who takes very seriously the Stewardship emphasis in the Christian Education of Plymouth Church, has written a most helpful and suggestive article which ought to be discussed with Church School teachers and officers. Miss Catton has presented short shorts, fourteen of them, gathered from the experiences of local churches. Mrs. York of Maine and Mr. Horvath of New York are concerned for the children and the laymen, while Alexander Ferguson of the Missions Council presents a very clear analysis of the use of visual education in Stewardship.

The last six articles are all concerned with the financial program. Don't miss Mr. Eide's delightful application of Christian enthusiasm to the *work* of the church! Many people will be looking eagerly for Dr. Denison's word on this subject and he has given it succinctly in "How to Improve a Church's Financial Atmosphere." He should know! No one has had more experience than he, with all kinds of churches and all kinds of Finance Committees. We hope the bibliography at the end will prove useful.

Stewardship is today a major concern of our denominational fellowship and especially of its "laymen." At the General Council Meeting in Claremont this last summer the three Steward-

ship Seminars discussed very helpfully and with real life the whole program and its bearing for the churches. Below are six statements giving the gist of these discussions which we hope will give a clear picture of what Stewardship means and what we ought to do about it.

1. Stewardship is rooted and grounded in the Gospel and in the best tradition of the Church.
2. Stewardship is an essential part of the discipline of the Christian life.
3. Stewardship is the responsible expression of our gratitude to God for His goodness and grace made known to us in Jesus Christ.
4. Stewardship is a personal matter. It is best communicated by the contagious power of personal testimony and witness.
5. Stewardship in the local church deserves the continuous, year-round concern of a responsible, representative and officially chosen board or committee.
6. Three specially fertile areas for Stewardship cultivation in the local church are:
 - a. Children and Youth
 - b. New Members
 - c. The Stewardship Visitation or Every Member Canvass

I hope you will use these suggestions to help you make yours a better Stewardship Church. It's worth trying! Let us know if we can help you.

Very truly yours,

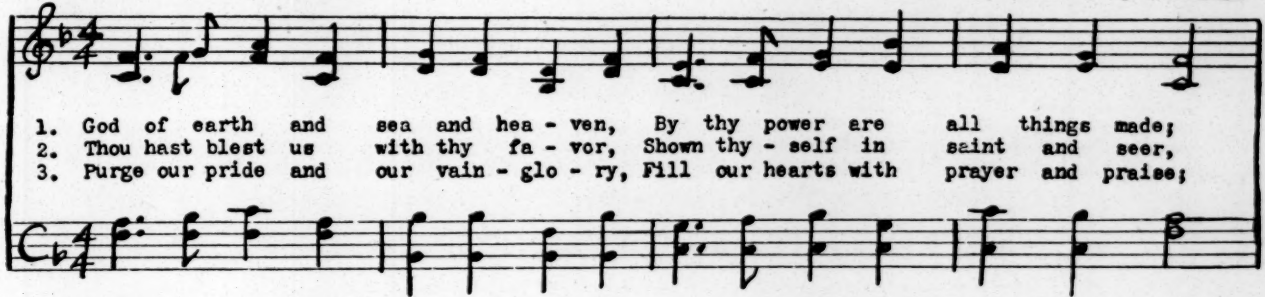
FRANK L. EDWARDS

Chicago, Illinois

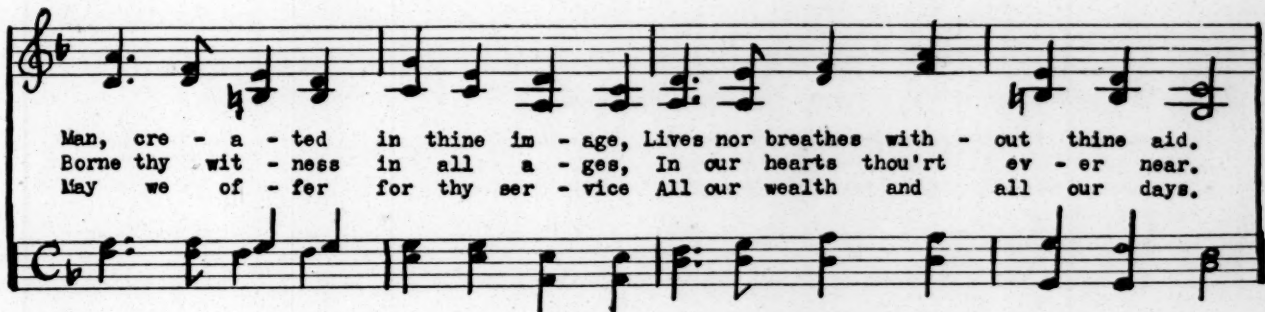
GOD OF EARTH AND SEA AND HEAVEN

Words by Frank L. Edwards

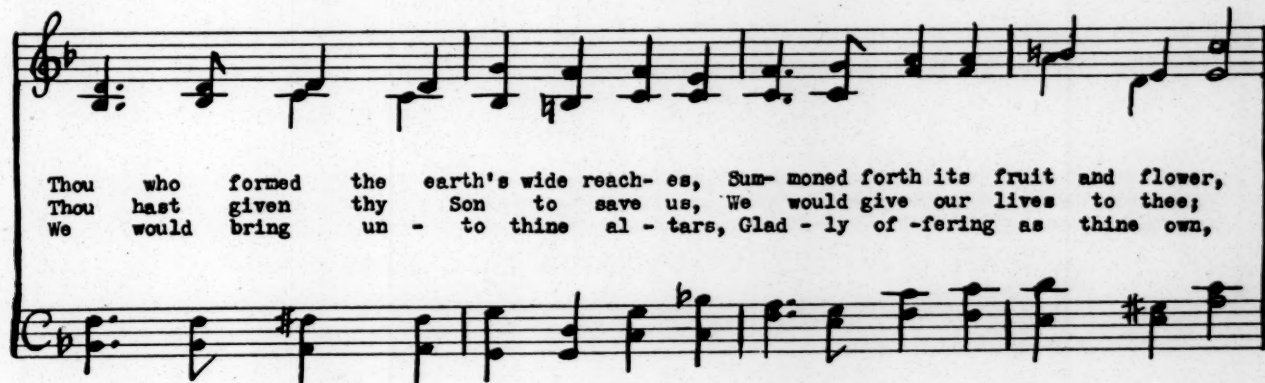
Music by Baldwin W. Callahan



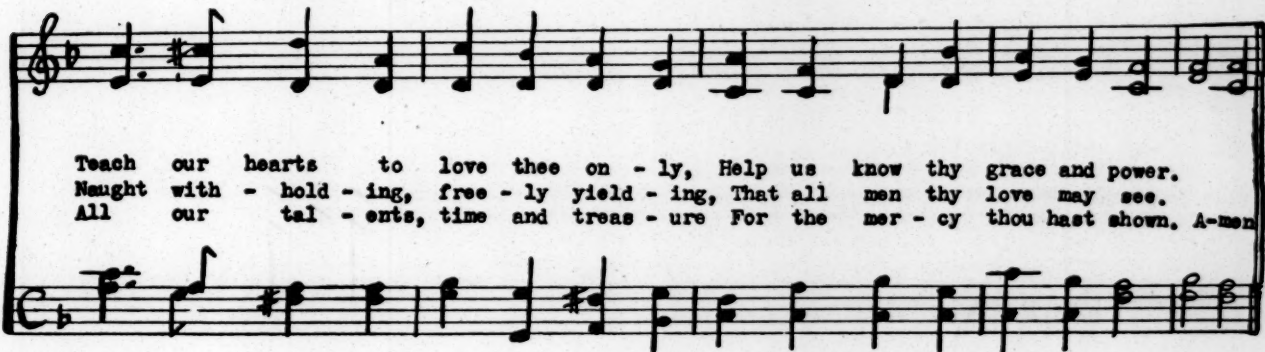
1. God of earth and sea and hea - ven, By thy power are all things made;
 2. Thou hast blest us with thy fa - vor, Shown thy - self in saint and seer,
 3. Purge our pride and our vain - glo - ry, Fill our hearts with prayer and praise;



Man, cre - a - ted in thine im - age, Lives nor breathes with - out thine aid.
 Borne thy wit - ness in all a - ges, In our hearts thou'rt ev - er near.
 May we of - fer for thy ser - vice All our wealth and all our days.



Thou who formed the earth's wide reach - es, Sum - moned forth its fruit and flower,
 Thou hast given thy Son to save us, We would give our lives to thee;
 We would bring un - to thine al - tars, Glad - ly of - fering as thine own,



Teach our hearts to love thee on - ly, Help us know thy grace and power.
 Naught with - hold - ing, free - ly yield - ing, That all men thy love may see.
 All our tal - ents, time and treas - ure For the mer - cy thou hast shown. A-men

TEN POINTERS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH COMMITTEE ON STEWARDSHIP

By DAVID H. SANDSTROM*

1. Plan carefully your meetings to avoid empty routine. Sharpen your projected program into a specific schedule with definite items, regular meetings and well-planned events.
2. Make sure your Committee is itself grounded in stewardship. Take time as a committee and with individuals to study stewardship literature. Besides many pamphlets, several books may be recommended: *Stewardship in the New Testament Church*, by Holmes Rolston (Knox Press \$1.00); *Stewardship Parables of Jesus*, by Long (Abingdon Press \$1.00); *Christianity and Property*, by Joseph T. Fletcher (Westminster Press \$3.00); *Strengthening the Spiritual Life*, by Nels Ferre (Harpers \$1.00).
3. Why do a job with bare hands when excellent tools are at hand? Have them on display at your planning meetings. Your kit should include at least the following:

ADVANCE. \$3.00 per year—ADVANCE, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

YOUR CONFERENCE PERIODICAL.

ENVELOPE SERIES. 4 issues per year—50 cents—14 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Mass.

FACTS FROM THE FIELD. 5 copies free—1½ cents.

(order FACTS and following items from Missions Council, 287 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.)

12 POINT STANDARD FOR MISSIONS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH—15 cents.

STEWARDSHIP FACTS—one copy free—30 cents.

* Rev. David H. Sandstrom, Minister of Stewardship in New York State Congregational Christian Conference.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES CALENDAR—50 cents.

(includes invaluable listing of denominational materials available to ministers and churches)

AUDIO-VISUAL CATALOGUE—free.

STEWARDSHIP BIBLIOGRAPHY—5 cents.

4. Mould your program to the church year's round. This means a plan of action centered in three seasonal emphases: The Every Member Canvass, The Turn of the Year and Lent.

These are not primarily, in most cases, the responsibility of the Stewardship Committee but may be in the hands of other groups. However, your Committee's help, or even initiative, may be of tremendous value, especially if the emphases have settled into a kind of usual routine.

- A. Share with your pastor and Canvass Committee the Fall Every Member Canvass Packet. Has your church received, and duly acted upon a suggested goal for giving to Our Christian World Mission? What are you doing to teach stewardship *to the prospective givers* in your Canvass? How about several showings of the year's film, *More for Peace*, in connection with EMC? (Order with guides and "throw-aways" from your Conference office.) Be alive to the situation. Everything your Committee represents is at stake in the Canvass!
- B. Can you make the "Turn of the Year" an occasion for witnessing to the stewardship of possessions (Christmas), of time (New Year) and of talents (installation of new officers following Annual Meeting)? Suggest a series of sermons on these themes. Use Christmas Coin Boxes (also available with Thanksgiving imprint), free of charge from Missions Council, for giving to Our Christian World Mission.
- C. During Lent recommend the use of "*Seek Ye First*," a filmstrip with record, for the training of new members in Christian Discipleship and Stewardship. May be had from the Department of Visual Aids, 287 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.—rental at \$2.50.

Also during Lent comes "ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING"—March 8, 1953, an appeal for the Relief and Reconstruction work of Our Christian World Mission. This project has much of the CROSS in it, and people will respond if you put Christian imagination and careful planning into your appeal.

5. Check and double check with important church groups their plans. Offer the help of your Committee especially for the following:
 - A. *WORK DAY FOR CHRIST*, October 25, 1952, when our Pilgrim Fellowship *young people* will offer their services in the parish and community, remuneration to be given to OCWM. Write Henry Rust, 14 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts.
 - B. *WOMEN'S GIFT*, a sacrificial ingathering by the local Society of Congregational Christian *Women*, and an extra gift for the mission of the church. Write your State President or Miss Margaret Hargrove, 287 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.
 - C. *STEWARDSHIP AND MISSIONS IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL*. Could someone of your committee be informed on the stewardship lessons in the Pilgrim Series as well as missions projects, and alert and attract church school teachers to this material?

Encourage Projects for the Month (for schools not using Pilgrim Series) as outlined monthly in *ADVANCE*. Write Armstrong Hunter or Grace E. Storms, both at 14 Beacon St., Boston 8, Massachusetts.
6. Why not take the initiative in promoting a LAYMAN'S SUNDAY in your church with a layman's message on Stewardship? Layman's Sunday is *October 10, 1952*. Or use laymen on Stewardship Sunday, *November 30*.
7. Do you have any tithers in your church? The Commission on Stewardship together with the Fellowship of Tithers is attempting to enroll 100,000 Congregational Christian church members as tithers, or one-tenth of the membership of each local church. Enrollments may be made with the Secretary, Dr. Stanbery J. Nichols, 56 Public Square, Me-

dina, Ohio. Send for tithing literature from Missions Council.

8. Have you a varied supply of stewardship literature on your literature table? Beware, no more than one or two numbers out at a time! Just how do you announce new literature available? For literature, refer to the FALL PACKET, the CHURCH ACTIVITIES CALENDAR or write the UNITED CANVASS, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y., for suggestions.
9. Support the Program of Stewardship being developed by your Association or State Conference, such as Schools of Stewardship and Every Member Canvass Chairman Meetings. Be sure your church is represented by alert young laymen with good possibilities for leadership in the future.
10. Never hesitate to write:

MISSIONS COUNCIL—287 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

FRANK L. EDWARDS, Commission on Stewardship, 19 South LaSalle Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WANT TO GIVE!

By DON A. BUNDY*

Stewardship means more than money. Stewardship is an idea, a concept, and a concern. Stewardship is more than a special offering, more than a can of string beans, more than a barrel of old clothing. Stewardship is a way of life, an attitude, a membership fee for joining the human race.

That's what makes it hard to *teach* stewardship. It's so much easier to count money, or total the canned beans in their white tissue paper wrappers, or weigh the used clothing. But stewardship, the idea, is illusive. It takes years of intelligent teaching, preaching and demonstration to lift the level of a person to the plane of real stewardship. That's why the wise church starts early to teach stewardship, and never stops. The smallest of children grasp the big idea of stewardship when the church school teaches about God's world, God's gift of life, and God's gift of Jesus. "This is my Father's world" is a great stewardship line from a great hymn. It takes *the ownership out of the hands of people and puts it in the hands of God*.

Children can understand this easier than many adults, because adults frequently confuse themselves with God, and think they own things. Children can be grateful spontaneously; adults have to work at it. Good stewardship is channeled gratitude. It is saying "Thank you, God" and meaning it. It is counting blessings, and then giving some away.

How do we get this idea to work in church school? First of all, we *believe* it. Our teachers and leaders must believe it enough to *practice* it; only then can they teach it with conviction. This first step is the hardest because it involves personal faith and action. The next steps are easier because they re-

* Rev. Don A. Bundy, Associate Minister, Plymouth Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

quire intelligence and good technique, and these are always easier to find than faith. Here are some steps for making church school stewardship effective:

1. **Make giving a natural, normal expression of the Christian faith, which it is.** Don't reserve mention of giving for a few isolated campaigns during the year; rather, let the people know that we give of ourselves and our possessions because we believe. An early session in the fall should include in department worship and in classes conversation about the Christian eagerness to share with others. Why do we give? What do we give? (More than money, of course.)

2. **Make giving a regular act of worship.** Whether each Sunday's offering is received in a large department worship service, or in a small class situation, make something of it. Have a special place in each Sunday's activity in which each child takes his part as a contributing member of the church. In younger classes, beware of the tendency to "get the offering out of the way before the children drop it." Christian gifts are more important than that. The receiving of the offering should have as much dignity as the prayer—giving is a form of prayer.

3. **Make giving easy.** Increasingly church schools have realized the training value of the weekly offering envelope system. The small cost of church school offering envelopes is always offset by increased and more regular giving when the envelopes are used wisely, and their function is interpreted to children. They understand, as some adults fail to do, that the needs continue even when they are absent a Sunday, and they will frequently bring the "back envelopes" after a series of absences. Weekly envelopes give children stature at home, and may even help remind their parents that *their* envelopes need filling. Finally, envelopes give the family a chance to talk about giving, to think about a proper share for the church and church school. Good giving becomes a habit sooner when offering envelopes are used.

4. **Make giving intelligent.** Stewardship is the right combination of emotion and enlightenment. Neither element alone will do the job, either with children or adults. In a time when all parts of the world are near to us, the church school has a great teaching opportunity in making real the various places where Our Christian World Mission is at work. As we point out the human needs in a Turkish hospital, an Italian cave village, or a displaced Indian reservation, we must use every technique available to make plain *where* we are helping and *whom* we are helping. Maps, globes, posters, pictures, film strips, slides, movies and on-the-scene stories can all be used to capture child interest for this good work, even as secular entertainment employs them for shallow amusement. The battle for the child mind is a real fight today, and the Church of Christ must be alert to give quality presentations of its message and mission.

5. **Make giving efficient.** Gifts from children should be in the form that is most realistically useful to the people being helped. Sometimes in our efforts to be "down to earth" we have become inefficient. Canned foods, for instance, are efficient gifts only if the cause is a local one. Shipping costs are simply too high to get assorted, heavy tinned food around our country, to say nothing of the world! How much better to use money and turn it into more food of the type really needed at the point where it is to be used, or at least to have the money used by denominational authorities who can buy in quantity the proper items, or even to secure dried or concentrated foods.*

Toys and games for children far away are sometimes efficient gifts if carefully planned to answer needs described by workers on the field.

Used clothing is often exactly the right type of gift to send. In this case let's be sure that the clothing is wearable on arrival, in above average rummage sale condition.

* See "Meals for Millions," the 3-cent meal.

When money is the gift-form for convenience and economy of giving, concreteness can be given by the use of a symbolic object, dramatically executed. For example, if money is to be used for overseas food, let's get sample CARE packages or "MEALS FOR MILLIONS" for display beforehand. If it's for hospital equipment, let's have models made of that equipment. A primary class raised extra dollars for such a cause and used for their offering a box made to look like a hospital bed. When the bedful of money was placed on the communion table during a church service, even adults were impressed!

6. Make giving friendly. The greatest benefit to the giver, besides learning the art of sharing, is the cultivation of friendship that crosses all boundaries. All stewardship presentations should try to humanize the people receiving the help. *Persons* appeal more than anything else. Children respond to children's needs. If letters from our classes and departments can also express the concern that our gifts show, how much more friendly the world-wide church becomes. If replies can be obtained from people receiving our gifts, such replies will thrill the children who gave. And it is not important that the replies be Emily Post-ish thank-yous, but descriptive, friendly notes which can be read or translated into children's language. An exchange of Christmas cards and notes from our Fort Berthold Indians has impressed the Primary Department in our church as no amount of talking could do.

Here, then, are six steps that will make child stewardship more effective. Many of the same principles obviously apply to giving by members of a local Pilgrim Fellowship. In *youth giving*, however, *there are some additional pointers*.

The average youth fellowship is eager for program ideas. No better source of good program is available than stewardship themes. Audio-visual programs (properly rehearsed), panel discussions, simulated world tours, visiting missionary speakers—these are all easy-to-use stewardship programs for youth. EN-

VELOPE SERIES contains a wealth of "this we can do" suggestions which may be adapted for local youth group use. Other denominational materials offer help to the advisor who is sincere in his attempt to make stewardship practice vital to youth. Warning: Mission programs can be deadly for young people if swallowed whole. Topics of this sort should have a lilt or a twist to appeal to the pseudo-sophisticates who inhabit our Pilgrim Fellowship. Programs *must* be good; but the real test is "*are they interesting?*" Above all, the church must never forget its distinctive place in the world. Our programs dealing with the world-wide family should not be on the level of mere travelogues. We deal with the basic Christian concepts of brotherhood, justice and peace, not because they are politically interesting, but because they are religious imperatives.

State Pilgrim Fellowship projects, following National P. F. suggestions, **lend themselves to valuable execution on the local level.** The projects are to raise money, yes, but they must first raise interest and concern. Check the projects available, the sources of materials listed, and well in advance get these materials for your planning sessions with the program committee. Sometimes a local Pilgrim Fellowship will want to raise funds for a particular project in Our Christian World Mission. If it can be done within the framework of the State P. F. organization it is better than if sent directly to a National Board. This helps the State P. F. council to raise its budget, and of course interprets the P. F. organization to your young people.

The Pilgrim Fellowship is often enough important but untrained potential churchmanship. What are the sources of Pilgrim Fellowship gifts? In the case of children's giving, practically all money is "family money," but most young people of today have "incomes" of their own. Sometimes this means allowances or part-time earnings. Possession of such money often presents a real challenge to the stewardship approach. *It's harder to give your own money to a cause than to give dad's money.*

Yet, it is precisely here, at the youth level, that stewardship training for churchmanship is so vitally needed. Here is the time when proportionate giving to the church becomes essential. Ideally, it would seem logical that every high school youth should be making a pledge of some amount regularly to his church. Within our denomination high school church members have status, and with it obligations to support "as they are able" the total ongoing program of the church. There is no substitute for the training value of the youth pledge to the church, no matter how small these pledges may be. Parents who write a family pledge and thereby prohibit Jim and Jane from a pledge of their own, render a great disservice to the young people and to the church of the future. Careful stewardship education at the top level is needed here; coaching of canvassers so they may secure youth pledges in the homes they visit is vitally important.

Now, establishing the basic stewardship emphasis of the youth church pledge, we are ready to set up the plans for Pilgrim Fellowship giving. In a sense this is *extra* giving, and if a local P. F. has regular dues, these should be set with the basic church pledge in mind. More desirable, perhaps, is the technique of regular free-will offerings. This permits no injustices to those who cannot afford regular dues, but who can and will make an offering. On the other side, it is important that the church and its Pilgrim Fellowship should not be overly timid about youth sharing. The total weekly church gift through pledge, church school and P. F. should bear a healthy relationship to youth expenditures for movies, dances and sodas. Young people like to be talked to man-to-man on this matter, and no P. F. advisor should minimize the importance of the stewardship call.

But what about special projects and giving to them? It is here that our procedure can produce not only education, but rather substantial gifts to carry on Christian work. Once a proj-

ect is chosen, studied and accepted as worthy of work by the group, how should the money be raised?

The methods are so numerous that mention cannot be made of all of them here. Certain basic rules should be followed. We mention four.

Money raising methods should always be in good taste and above reproach in the community as well as in the church.

Money raising by youth should always be fun as well as constructive. *Fellowship is a real part of stewardship.*

Any plans for the sale of items or of services must always give the buyer full value for his money. The practice of chiseling money from victims in the guise of a "worthy cause" is unworthy of Christian youth.

Money raising by youth should result from the work of the young people themselves, and not over-generous parents or adults. Certain *basic* techniques should be considered. Here are techniques that have worked:

1. The Work-Day Plan, which involves *real labor for young people*, who are paid a decent wage for their efforts, from baby-sitting to car-washing. This is a coöperative enterprise and depends for its success on all members participating. Earnings are turned in to the P. F. fund. For those young people who already have regular jobs the group should decide some equivalent donation to match the earnings of those in the work-day plan. The work-day technique becomes a public relations job for Christian youth—which means that it must be carefully organized so that job needs are properly filled, and the work well done. Two hints: a fellowship lunch prepared by a parent committee can make this much more fun. A summing up ceremony at which the money is dedicated should be held.

2. Plays or home talent shows. These can be excellent group projects, and raise money, too. Whatever form these take *the program must be good*. The church must acquire a reputation for doing things of this sort at least as well as the schools.

3. Special programs with an outside speaker or motion picture. An offering received after careful presentation of the project will appeal to adults—if the program is of high calibre.

4. Suppers, bake sales, and the selling of various items can produce revenue. Watch the rule of giving *value*. The public should be happy with its contribution, not just badgered into giving.

5. Just plain giving. An eagerness to think up an idea for raising money sometimes gets in the way of the simplest plan of all—sacrificial giving. The Lenten Season, for example, lends itself beautifully to the use of personal stewardship giving. Milk bottles or coin boxes may be used to remind each P. F. member of his special Lenten gift. Again, there should be a service of dedication when the money is finally collected. The appeal of this plan must be twofold: the worth of the project, and the need for personal “taking on” of something special for Lent. (*Not “giving up.”*) Good planning will make any of these group efforts productive.

Stewardship is fun. Stewardship is Christian. Children and young people want to give. It is up to the church leadership to help them give.

"AS THE TWIG IS BENT . . ."

*By GLADYS DOUGHTY YORK**

Have you ever observed the look of joy on the face of young children in church as they eagerly reach out to drop their gifts into the offering plate? Too young to sing or to understand the message of the preacher, they can yet share in worship through giving. I have likewise seen the look of tragic disappointment as some unthinking usher has passed them by, supposing them too young to have any gift to give. One cannot begin too young to lead little children into the joys of stewardship. As soon as a child is old enough to reach out his hand, he is old enough to place a gift in the offering plate at church. As soon as a child is old enough to ask for "a nickel for candy or gum," he is old enough to have church envelopes, "just like mother and daddy," with a gift regular though small.

If the child is given money to put into the envelope the first of the week when parents fix their envelopes, before money is spent on selfish pleasures (God's gift coming first), the child will begin to learn. Of course, we cannot dole out "dimes" for candy and "nickels" for God, or that also is learned. By the time a child begins to realize the difference between nickels and dimes, as early as five or six today, his parents give him a small allowance. Then the child can decide, with parental help, how much should go to God, and make out his own pledge card. At the same time, a definite plan for savings may be made. After he has set aside God's gift and a Savings Fund, what is left is for oneself, to spend or to give gifts as occasion demands. The child must have oversight, so that the envelopes are filled and deposited regularly, for the education of the child as well as for the work of the Kingdom. It is never too early, then, to help

* Mrs. York is Minister of First Congregational Church, No. Yarmouth, Maine.

children see how their "gifts for God" enable their church to serve people and to tell others about God. The pride and joy and sense of responsibility thus developed in a young child will pay big dividends for the Kingdom in years to come.

At first, a child's interest in *missionary* giving will come through "special offerings." The child will naturally inquire about the envelopes he sees his parents have, and ask for one for himself. The parents should give the young child a small gift to put in his own special envelope, always explaining the purpose of the gift. By the time the child has had his own allowance a year (in early primary age) he can be encouraged to look into his own money box, and decide how much he really wants to share in this special gift. By all means, do not discourage a generous move, even though it seems out of proportion to the child's resources. He will soon learn to hoard or spend on self as most grownups do!

It will not be a long step from the time a child enjoys sharing out of his own funds "for telling the good news of Christ to others" to the time he can be led to share by a regular pledge, in the missionary work of his church. He should be encouraged to think his gift through carefully, and then faithfully to keep the promise he has made. What a joy to church treasurers if all who contribute had received such careful training in their youth! If children's enthusiasm sometimes fades, they can be helped by a reminder of the truth of Jesus' words as evidenced in their own lives: "Give and it shall be given you . . . , for with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38. As children are received into the membership of the church, they are ready to respond to the challenge of Christ: "Go ye into all the world. . . ." They can easily understand that the only way they can go, for the present, and the only way they may ever go, is by giving their gifts, buoyed up by their prayers, that missionaries of the cross may go in their name and for Christ's sake. Out of the little they may earn at the moment, or

receive as an allowance for spending money, they will gladly and proudly plan "what proportion belongs to God." And that gift, in turn, will be solemnly divided between the work of their local church, and the cause of Christ in the rest of the world. The amount may seem a nuisance to the church treasurer, hardly warranting the expense and trouble of church envelopes. But "once a tither, always a tither"; and the boy or girl who gives 3 cents a week to the church and 2 cents to missions today may be giving \$3.00 and \$2.00 just ten years later, and \$5.00 or \$10.00 before too many years have passed.

Every member of *every* church should be encouraged to think of the "Total Mission of the Church," not just the local church, and to give accordingly. Every person needs to consider giving as relationship to God, and to be taught responsibility toward God and man, as stewards of the good earth and all that is produced therein. Adults need constantly to be reminded that the Christian mission of the church is largely accomplished through the "regular giving" of those who care (about 80% in most churches).

With adults as with young children, it pays to develop Christian imagination about the local budget and gifts for missions. I have seen missionary giving increase from thirty-two cents to \$3.00 or more a month, in a small rural church school, when, instead of extracting 2 cents a week from each class for a missionary unknown to the children, they gave to buy a blanket for a leper child in India, or school supplies for a bush school in Africa, or church school pictures for a bombed-out church in Europe. Interestingly enough, the children gave as much or more for local church school expense at the same time. How? They merely brought five or ten cents for the offering, dividing it as they saw fit each week, rather than a penny. People, big or little, will find something to give, *if they find something worth giving to*. But let any minister, parent or teacher beware of his *words* on stewardship, unless his own *example* measures

up. Otherwise, we shall hear the old proverb: "What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say."

The best part of all this stewardship training is that we have done something fine for the individual, as well as increasing manifold the resources of the church for the Kingdom of God. For the oft-quoted words are true: "All that we give unto the lives of others, comes back again to bless our own." This is true whether our gifts be money, thought or time;—as true as the words of Jesus: "Give and it shall be given you. . . ." The stewardship of money, time and talents brings joy to the individual, to others, and to God; and the Lessons in Stewardship are the joyous responsibility of the leadership in the local church. Are you doing your job as well as you might?

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YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT STEWARDSHIP

Experiences from the Field

*Reported by IONE CATTON**

From churches here and there, Conferences here and there, and members from a wide variety of our local fellowships have come the following reports. The writers are nameless here. Their works do follow them. We commend them to you.

1. *Holiday House.* One of our Midwest families has been in the habit of taking a summer vacation trip together. Last summer they decided to stay at home and make a vacation there for people in our fellowship (and related to it) who needed such friendliness. At the last accounting, they had entertained 19 such cases: two furlough missionaries, three foreign students studying in the United States, an aged woman of their own community whose family needed a vacation, two children of other racial groups from a distant state, etc. This family means business as stewards of their home.
2. *Prayer Calendar.* One of our church families has made a prayer calendar for its own use in family prayers every week. Each week the calendar bears the name of some person about whom one or more of the family have learned through their church program: e.g., a missionary in Japan, a migrant child, a DP family, a teacher in one of our AMA colleges, a pastor of a new church in a new town, etc.
3. *Preparation for Church Membership.* A Midwest church requiring one whole year to study and prepare for membership in the church (and it is Congregational Christian!) gives several weeks' instruction in Christian Stewardship.

* Miss Ione Catton is Resource Secretary, Missions Council, New York.

These people know that church membership includes sacrificial giving.

4. *Dollar for Dollar*. A Southern layman says, "Every time I get a raise, my church gets one; every time I get a bonus or an extra gift, my church gets one."
5. *Young Man on His First Job*: "In making out my first budget, I had five columns of 'MUSTS': church, rent, food, clothing, and taxes."
6. *Living Here and There*. "Last week our family lived in Japan; next week we shall live in India; this week we live on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota." So spoke a high school girl in a Pilgrim Fellowship group meeting. Her family was devoting some time each day to learn about and "live with" people whom our churches are serving near and far. They used materials secured from the church and provided in letters and leaflets from the Boards of the church.
7. *Stewardship of Labor*. More than 100 of our Congregational Christian young people have this summer donated a portion of their vacation time (this is *earning* time for them!) to manual labor in work camps at home and abroad, assisting to rebuild physical structures and hope and courage where such are needed.
8. *Fifty-Fifty*. "Every time I order a soda, every time I go to a movie this summer, and I mean *every* time, I am going to set aside the same amount and give it for relief and reconstruction work in Europe. It will mean half as many treats for me but kids over there are depending on me." A Junior High School boy is talking.
9. *Beginning with Me*. A minister in a larger parish, where for some years not a dollar has been given to the Mission of the Church, sets the example for the first of this giving by his own sacrificial gift to Our Christian World Mission. For

the first time that congregation, following his example, has made a pledge to Our Christian World Mission.

10. *Question to a New Church Member*: "What difference does it make to belong to the church?" "Well, for one thing, as soon as you are a member you make a plan for sharing with those who need them, your own blessings of food, clothing, civil rights, church fellowship."
True..... False.....
11. *Parents Speaking*: "When our boy was six years old, we began giving him a weekly allowance. On that day we began training him in what to spend, what to save, what to give. He began making his regular voluntary contribution to his church the first week. It has increased by his own decision with each increase in his allowance."
12. *Stay-at-Home Evening*. A church family decided to spend one evening each week together in work for or study about their church, were discovered one Wednesday evening engaged in the following: the father was reading "Mission to America" by Truman B. Douglass; the mother was preparing to lead a discussion in an interchurch meeting of the church on "Better Race Relations in this Neighborhood"; the twelve-year-old son was working in the basement on an electric map of Africa spotting places where our churches work there; the high-school daughter was making a set of three posters on the uses of the Lenten offering in her Pilgrim Fellowship.
13. *Item in Weekly Church Bulletin*: "How many times within the last thirty days have you prayed for your minister, for members in your church, for representatives of the church in its wider mission at home or abroad?"
14. *Every Member Canvass*. A group of laymen counsel with their minister by rethinking and replanning the entire procedure of the Canvass, to make it an additional process and a religious experience for the whole parish.

THE KEY LAYMAN IN THE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

By THEODORE S. HORVATH*

"John, tell me, how do you go about your work as a Key Layman?"

We've all been accepting the truism that the Stewardship Program of our churches will go forward only as consecrated laymen in increasing numbers assume leadership in it. But I determined to find out for myself in detail just what rôle a layman can play in vitalizing the stewardship life of our local churches and how he goes about his task.

So I singled out the layman who heads up the Stewardship Committee of his District and I put my question to him. I lunched with him at his place of work, in one of the great industrial concerns of the world. There, in a pleasant dining room, high in an office building in the midst of a great metropolis, we talked of important matters pertaining to the Church.

"What I try to do," he answered, "is to make direct personal contact with the minister of each local church in my area and talk with him about Our Christian World Mission. I then look for an opportunity to speak to the people of his congregation about stewardship and the missionary enterprise of our Congregational Christian Churches."

We expect denominational executives and ministerial leaders, I thought to myself, to carry on this kind of promotional work and ride the circuit of local churches to rally their people to the cause. But here is a layman whose daily occupation is in the supervisory department of an important industry, and yet who takes his calling as a Christian to heart and with his own time and talent responds to the Great Commission. Steward-

* Rev. Theodore S. Horvath, Minister, First Congregational Church, E. Bloomfield, N. Y.

ship to him literally means the setting aside of time and ability as well as money for the Lord's work.

"I offer to come to speak at Church fellowship suppers," he went on, "or even at Sunday morning services. Meetings of men's clubs, or women's societies, or youth fellowships are other occasions when I have been able to bring to people the story of Our Christian World Mission."

"Do you find it difficult to get invitations from some of the churches?" I asked.

"That's one of the problems," John went on. "Sometimes ministers say that their program is already too full, sometimes they are reluctant to have outsiders come in. But I *have* been able to get into all thirty of the churches in our District with the exception of one, and once given a chance to tell about Our Christian World Mission, I have been asked to come back by some of our churches to tell more. Our people want to be informed and keeping them informed is our biggest job."

I surmised that the visual and printed aids produced by the Congregational Christian Churches would play an indispensable part in the kind of promotion that this layman carries on.

"Yes," he said, "I showed our film of the year, *A Wonderful Life*, and the filmstrip, *The Church is There*, myself in fifteen out of our thirty churches last Fall. Since many of the small churches do not have audio-visual equipment of their own, I take along a projector and screen. *The Church is There* is one of the best things we have available. I see that it is part of our kit of tools for the canvasses again this year. Although I did without *Advance* for a number of years, I couldn't do without it now. You can add to that too our Conference journal, *Conference Trails*."

I was interested in just what this key layman says in one of his talks in the local churches. So I asked him, "Do you feel it is enough to inform the people of our churches about Our Christian World Mission, or do you offer them some concrete

suggestion of what they should be doing about it?"

Without hesitation he said, "I come right out for the practice of tithing as the only way to support the Lord's work. I find little resistance to the idea of tithing; few raise questions about it, most just listen to the suggestion passively. But if I'm not doing anything else I'm at least planting a few seeds. Here's the way I look at it," he went on to explain. "Most of your money today is spent for you, so to speak. The tithe you can spend as you want on something really important. My family budgets its money and the tithe is always there to meet our pledge to the church and to give in answer to appeals from worth-while causes. There's great joy and satisfaction in knowing that you can designate a sizable part of your money in this way and leave it untouched by the other demands of life for the basically important, but often neglected, values in this world. We have been able to convert a few others in our home church to the practice of tithing. If others could be convinced of the happiness that tithing can bring, they too would become tithers."

These words brought to life once again the admonition that I had read not long before, to go on from "giving until it hurts" to "giving until you really enjoy it." Here was further evidence that tithing is a precious spiritual experience and, in the last analysis, is the acid test of the Christian life.

It is another truism that the practice of tithing throughout our fellowship would remove the necessity of any other kind of financial goal, national, state, association, or local, for Our Christian World Mission, and the work of the Lord would be immeasurably enriched and expanded. Here is a layman who is helping to plant the seeds for that new day.

Behind this man stands a State Conference ready to equip him with information and tools. "One of the most helpful things," John pointed out, "has been the Key Layman Training Program sponsored by the Conference in which we had the opportunity to hear leaders from the Missions Council, the

American Board, and the Board of Home Missions tell us about the work of the Church at home and abroad." But the initiative and drive and sense of urgency and sense of responsibility are his own. On his own time he and his wife recently visited the East Harlem Parish, one of the home missions projects in which we have a share, so that he could see for himself and out of first-hand experience be better able to tell of the needs among the teeming masses quartered there. On his own he carries on the cultivation of the ministers and congregations in the local churches of his District. On his own he spends summer Sunday mornings worshipping with one or another of these local congregations and using such opportunities to make new acquaintances and renewing old ones. And his wife is a partner in all this work, exemplifying a man-and-wife partnership at its best in the work of the Church. In all that he is doing, though, he feels modestly that he is hardly scratching the surface. "We have to keep plugging away convincing people on stewardship and involving more and more lay people in our promotional work. Our next move will be to find a Key Layman in every local church to be the local resource person and contact man for the stewardship and mission program of our Congregational Christian Churches. This will be the Conference emphasis this year, and I believe it offers great hope for advancing Our Christian World Mission on all fronts."

This, then, is what I learned of the motivation, the approach, the activities of one layman's efforts in promoting stewardship in the churches of his District. As we finished lunch and went our separate ways, he back to his desk and I out into the bustling streets of the city, I was more convinced than ever that there would be value in setting down the results of my interview for others to read. In some way they may be suggestive and helpful to ministers who are in a position to give laymen practical guidance in the planting and cultivating of stewardship ideas and practices in the local parish, or suggestive and

helpful to lay leaders themselves who are looking for ways of becoming more effective. In the work of this layman are hints we all can use in working as co-partners with God, strengthening our churches to be surer and more perfect instruments of His will.

The layman whom Mr. Horvath interviewed is Mr. John W. Thorne, Chairman of the Ontario District (of Western New York Association) Stewardship Committee; Treasurer for Western New York Association of Congregational, Christian, and Community Churches; Treasurer of his own church, the United Church of Irondequoit (Rochester), New York; and a Key Layman for the New York Conference's Stewardship Committee. Mr. Thorne's occupation is Supervisor of the Apparatus Service Department at the Main Offices of the Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester.

PUTTING "UMPHF" IN TRAINING FOR STEWARDSHIP

By ALEXANDER B. FERGUSON*

Let's face it—Mr. Average Church Goer would rather not hear much about Stewardship. "A couple of sermons a year—perhaps—but don't labor the point," he will tell you. Why? Because to him Stewardship means money. And talking about money in church means he will be asked to give. In persuading him to give out of what he has left after the high cost of living the church faces some classy competition. A whole civilization, a high-powered advertising industry, a thousand and one desires in his own mind, all compete with the appeal of the church for his remaining dollars.

We know Mr. Average Church Goer's attitude isn't right. That poses the basic problem we face—leading Mr. Average Church Goer to set aside a proportionate amount off the top of his income—from what he gets rather than from what is left—and to find joy in doing so. Tackling the problem successfully requires stewardship training with real "umphf." Audio-visual materials in the hands of a skilled and dedicated user can help provide that "umphf!"

Emphasize Human Need

First, show Mr. Average Church Goer, clearly and graphically, human need which he can and must help meet. Let him see individuals, people like himself, who are *worthy* of receiving a portion of his hard-gained money. Set up an institute or discussion group or a series of family nights using audio-visual material to highlight need. Titles of visual materials suitable for this purpose include:

* Rev. Alexander B. Ferguson is Director, Dept. of Visual Aids, 287 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

Kyoto Story, a 25-minute, 16mm color sound film release on American Board mission work in Japan as seen through the eyes of a G.I. Service charge is \$5.00.

The Challenge of Africa, a 27-minute black and white sound motion picture presenting the great struggle gripping Africa today as young people decide what to believe, how to rise out of old ways, how to build a nation with freedom and opportunity for all. It shows starkly the contrast between the Christian and Communistic points of view. Service charge \$8.00.

We Hold These Truths, a 25-minute black and white release on Home Missions and Human Rights. Picturing the struggle of minority groups in America, we see the plight of Negroes and Puerto Ricans housed in densely populated Harlem, of Indians in the Southwest, etc., and of how the church and its workers supported out of benevolence-giving are helping. Service charge \$8.00.

The Church is There, a sound filmstrip (showing time 18 minutes) presents the total scope of the Church, what it is doing today and why real support of its program is justified. Emphasizes human need and how the Church helps meet it. Free from your State Conference office.

The Basis of the Blueprint, an 18-minute black and white sound film highlighting the tremendous population growth and changes in America which make densely populated communities of our land churchless. Free from your Conference office.

These titles are described in detail in the catalogue of "Audio-Visual Material for your Church" available from the nearest Missions Council Office, which will also list other films useful in emphasizing need.

Train for Understanding About Money

Secondly, beyond meeting human need, the beginning level of Stewardship, Mr. Average Church Goer must be led to understand the true nature and importance of money. Here, too, audio-visual material will prove helpful. Plan a series of discussions using:

The Miracle of Warren Walker, an art color sound filmstrip, 18 minutes, in which a carpenter comes to see the money he earns is actually part

of himself—that he can send “himself” overseas or anywhere in his own nation, to serve, heal, educate, inspire men and women everywhere, even while he works at his trade—all through the miracle of money.

Two Dollars, an art sound color filmstrip, available from many State Conference offices and from the Pilgrim Press, picturing two attitudes toward money, one miserly—one generous. Thought-provoking.

For Good or Evil, 16mm sound film, 48 minutes long. Rental \$12.00, available from the Religious Film Association, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, or from local film libraries. Produced by the United Lutherans but useful to all. A dramatic story of three men, “successful” and prosperous, and of their attitudes toward money.

No Greater Power, 16mm sound film, 20 minutes long, produced by Cathedral Films of Hollywood. Available from the Religious Film Association, and from local libraries. The re-enacting of a portion of the life of the tax collector, Zaccheus, who believed money to be the most powerful thing in the world. His contact with Jesus and his understanding of Jesus’ teachings changed his attitude and his life.

The Rich Young Ruler, 16mm sound film, 27 minutes long. Rental \$8.00, available from the Religious Film Association and local libraries, also a Cathedral release. A re-enactment of the story of the Rich Young Ruler who sought eternal life. How he comes to sell his goods and follow Jesus is the basis of the story and the teaching on Stewardship.

Ask for Money and Lives

But good Stewardship involves not only giving one’s money, gladly and generously, but also dedicating one’s life in service. This is the final step in training for Stewardship—helping Mr. Average Church Goer to see that Stewardship involves treating his life, all that he has, as a trust from God, to be spent as God wills.

Audio-visual material will help here too. Plan a series of worshipful, inspirational services using:

Second Chance, 16mm motion picture, 65 minutes long, free from State Conference offices. The dramatic story of a woman who comes to see how life can really be worth living. Intense—inspiring.

A Wonderful Life, second of the free feature films for Stewardship available to our churches from State Conference offices, 45 minutes long. The actual, true life story of Henry Wood, how he gave not only his money but himself for real service to his family, his community, and his church.

More for Peace, the current release in the series, now ready for distribution from State Conference offices. The story of Bill Grayson, a young man who has recently returned from the Korean struggle. What can he do now with his life? How can he count in building the better world he desires? What can he do through his church, giving and serving through it, toward building the world he wants for his son? A gripping film which every church in our fellowship should use this fall.

Audio-Visual Materials Need Careful Use

These are but suggestions from the many titles available to put "umphf" in Stewardship training. How successful they are depends upon how wisely they are used. These are inspirational, educational materials—*not for entertainment*. They need a context—a family-night series—a Lenten-devotional series, an *occasion*—when all who come understand they are there not for entertainment but for instruction, inspiration, rededication.

In addition to a context, audio-visual materials need a careful audience conditioning. This requires: adequate presentation to the audience, good handling of technical problems so that all may see and hear, clear understanding before the picture begins as to what is to be learned and felt about the picture.

Finally, beyond a clear context and good conditioning, there must be a continuation, a carrying through, giving an audience a chance to respond—with their money and their ideas. The visual presentation must be picked up by adequate reference to characters, to story line, in sermons, in teaching, in counselling, and so on. Expect something to have happened because a film was used—but *make sure it happens*. These are the principles for careful use of audio-visual material.

Tools For Our Day

Audio-Visuals are the tools of today. They have arrived on the scene in our time—to help us in our task of training in this, the basic area of living—being a steward. We who are leaders are not rising to our full responsibility as stewards if we fail to use all God has so hopefully put into human hands for enlightenment and inspiration in our time. Audio-Visual Aids will add “umphf” to your program. Use them!

INTERESTING STEWARDSHIP TECHNIQUES

By T. K. THOMPSON*

During the past few months a number of interesting techniques, some new, some re-creatively adapted, have come to my attention. One of the best came from a member of a Midwestern church who writes enthusiastically of the results of the use of the familiar media of press and radio: "We keep in close touch and friendship with the *local press*. No week goes by without church items in both our local newspapers. We promote every church-related activity. When our church celebrates special events, we can count on our local press."

Again, he writes: "We're on the *local radio* every Sunday morning for one solid hour. We offer timely, scriptural messages positively and use tested methods for every type of local promotion."

The same church makes use of *panel discussions, seminars, quiz programs* and *mass meetings* on the Congregational level. It gives opportunity for *reports of all delegates* to associational meetings, leadership training convocations, young people's conferences and camps, and any gatherings where the church was represented. There is an item for delegates in the church budget, and reports are well discussed by the groups that hear them.

Stewardship, you say? Yes, Stewardship of time, of talent, of representation, of responsibility.

This church applies Stewardship technique also to the evangelism program. It selected a group of men, instructed them, gave them a demonstration, and let them try it out. Result? "We have ten or twelve laymen who could present the church's program effectively anywhere. They have attended associations

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and conferences as well as special church meetings at their own expense, and can really tell the story of Jesus and His love."

In the *direct promotion* of stewardship, the church sponsors proportionate giving, instruction for all ages from beginners to adults, the use of stewardship illustrations at the time of the offering, special sermons, "treasure" boxes, and frequent displays of leaflets and books.

This church also practices the *prompt remittance of all missionary funds and benevolences monthly*.

One of the special features utilized by this church is a *Men-in-Service map*, showing the places where boys from the church are stationed, as well as mission stations and the localities where missionaries from the area are serving.

A second vital illustration came from a church on the Pacific Coast, in which there were sixty-two families. Their Finance Committee computed the gain that would accrue to the church if all these families *tithed*. The average income was estimated as \$2,500. The yield above current expenses of the local congregation would be \$7,500 for Missions. A letter was sent to each family, suggesting possible uses for such a sum of money. Here are some of the suggestions:

1. Full tuition for a student in a college or seminary.
2. Full support of a foreign missionary for a year.
3. Three goats to Puerto Rico to improve breeding stock.
4. 150 shots of penicillin to a hospital in India.
5. Five young people sent to a summer camp.

These churches are imaginative; they are on their toes! Perhaps other churches will use these suggestions for widening their ministry.

ON CHRISTIAN ENTHUSIASM

By LEROY E. EIDE*

It doesn't take a spiritual Geiger counter to detect the element of enthusiasm in a church, for it keeps popping up *expectedly* everywhere. It flashes on the countenance of every adherent, it is the coziness of climate purred at you from every beam and even heard between the lines of every reading of minutes in the fellowship. It permeates the church like an impending wedding; it is a shared twinkle in every eye, a buoyancy in every step from the youngest Church School pupil to the faithful custodian whistling at his work.

Wherever we find a minister with an eager enthusiasm for his work, and the laity "steamed up" about the church, its purpose, its program, and especially about the possibilities and the practicability of the Christian way of life, there you find a church where things are happening.

Most any person who is at all familiar with the local church will, I think, follow willingly enough up to this point and will at this moment be saying, "Granted that enthusiasm is an indispensable need in the church; but doesn't it have to *follow* something—must it not be deserved?"

This of course is a thoughtful question and should challenge those who plan the program of the church that it may exemplify such imagination and vision as to enlist the enthusiastic support of all the constituents.

However, to any sincere inquirer it must appear that there is enough of greatness and significance about *every* church to call forth an eager response from each of us.

The most prolific parent of Christian enthusiasm seems to

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me to be the quality of Stewardship. It is the faith that moves men who are like mountains, it melts hearts of stone. It raises men from the burden of humdrum life into the joyful calling of a mighty purpose. It keeps man humble and in grateful acknowledgment of his Creator; yet it endows him with the glory of sonship and partnership with God. It gives direction and significance to life; it points true ways and genuine values; it makes the hearer also a doer.

We have today three clear steps to Stewardship in our Congregational Christian Churches.

1. *We must let our church members know the glorious magnitude of the Christian enterprise* of which they and their church are heirs. We need to inform them of the greatness of all the ministries of Our Christian World Mission and of how they and their church hold the key to its success. We have the responsibility of pointing out to them the challenge and the promise abiding in participation, and offering to each person the opportunity for expression of Christian love through giving and service.

If we do these things in a faithful, well-ordered and thorough way real steps have been taken toward creating or reactivating a congregation of well-informed, enthusiastic stewards.

2. From numerous firsthand observations, I feel fully convinced that no program in the church can so quickly and effectively arouse enthusiasm and all its lasting benefits as can *a well-planned and faithfully executed visitation into every home* in the parish by as many as possible well-prepared and hence enthusiastic visitors. There is no substitute for a friendly call into every home by visitors who are eager to testify on behalf of the church and to extend a personal invitation to each Christian to give of himself and his possessions as the natural act of sincere and responsible faith.

3. Again this year complete and *very fine tested helps known as the Planned Education program* are available from the Mis-

sions Council. Sample kits of plans and materials have been mailed to every church. Countless churches and churchmen are testifying to the effectiveness of this program and the many happy results. Says one minister, "For the first time in the history of our church, we have not had one moment of concern during the year about the securing of finances." Another writes following a Stewardship visitation program, "We have had to call a special church meeting for the unprecedented need of revising our budget upward." At least one minister has said, "If we had not secured one single dollar in pledges, this program would have been well worth while for its results of increased spirit, growth in interest, improved understanding and sense of fellowship." Many churches report new experiences of "over the top" giving to benevolences, the organization of men's fellowships, enrolling of new members, increased attendance at worship, enlisting of new church officers, Church School teachers, and many other valuable contributions resulting from an earnest and intensive program of emphasis on the principles and practices of Christian Stewardship—not as a technique of raising money—but as a way of life; full and satisfying, worthy of the call to Christian discipleship.

Christian churchmen are on the march. Their spirit is contagious; if they have it, they are bound to spread it! Let us pray and work for an epidemic!

TITHING SELLS ITSELF

*By SUMNER H. GILL**

The spiritual awakening which some of our readers feel is spreading through the Protestant Churches of America seems to be more a reawakening of dormant interest than an appearance of something completely new and fresh. Our grandfathers emphasized evangelism and the outreach of the church with unashamed zeal. But, years of "holding the fort" seemed to follow. Today the word "evangelism" is making a comeback! Tithing, an ancient, time-honored practice, was lost for a season, but is receiving fresh interest today.

Two years ago, the Board of Trustees in Pilgrim Church of Worcester decided to invite members of the congregation to tithe. No high-pressure campaign was started, but an invitation was issued to join with others in reinstating the time-honored practice and to form a "Fellowship of Tithers." Visits to a nucleus of devout people revealed a surprising interest. Many church members carried memories of times when tithing was taught in the Sunday School and from the pulpit. They also remembered strong, healthy churches and had sacred recollection of frugal parents who set aside a tenth of their income for God's redemptive work.

Of thirty-four families visited, twenty-four signed pledge cards as tithers. How much devotion and interest remains dormant when it is never challenged nor aroused! Tithing may lie in vague, shadowy form in the consciences of thousands who need only the presence of some initial stimulus to bring forth the reality of greater personal sacrifice with its consequence of richer spiritual life. Because of other activities which occupied the attention of the Board of Trustees last year, no further at-

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tempt was made to enlist new families. Without reminders or the stimulus of publicity, would the nucleus continue its practice of larger sacrifices? Leaders were pleased to discover that only one family discontinued tithing while two new families enrolled. Although tithing has not swept over the parish like a prairie fire, spiritual rewards carry sufficient power and satisfaction to endure. Everyone had a perfect opportunity to drop out, but almost no one did. What are the rewards of tithing? As one loves he knows the meaning of love; as one gains faith, he knows the value of faith; and the spirit of sacrifice represented in tithing reveals its own joys to those who enter in, for experience bears its own testimony.

HOW TO IMPROVE A CHURCH'S FINANCIAL ATMOSPHERE

By WARREN H. DENISON*

- I. Take all the church people into full confidence in your financial program. They are partners in the business. In too many churches there is suspicion about the handling of the funds. That suspicion in most cases is unfounded. Establish confidence by full assurance that all funds are used for the purposes given.
- II. Make it clear that church *finances are a vital, spiritual function* while providing funds for the church's program.
- III. Make the facts of your church life graphic and convincing. Use charts, diagrams, graphs, slides, etc. Church business meetings should throb with life and not mere cut-and-dried routine.
- IV. Select men and women of high personal character for your Finance Committee and for treasurers, people who are themselves outstanding, generous, proportionate givers, rather than merely close financiers.
- V. Elect some new persons to the Finance Committee or Department each year, with some system of rotation so that new leadership is constantly developed.
- VI. Require all funds to be properly accounted for in a businesslike way; prompt payments, arrears collected, vouchers for bills, audits, bonds, reports all in hand.
- VII. Require all organizations within the local church to report all receipts, disbursements and balances to the church itself for information and permanent record. Each organization should keep in mind that it is not the church, but only an arm of the church.

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- VIII. Have the budget made up by a committee composed of a member from every agency in the church. It should be based on the needs of the church rather than on the treasurer's books of last year. The benevolence budget should be a worthy one. The more generous the benevolence budget, the more easily will the current expense budget be underwritten. The tentative budget should be submitted to all the families of the church for suggestions and be adopted finally by the church.
- IX. No plan equals a thoroughly prepared-for Every Member Canvass, with double budget, duplex envelopes, individual subscriptions, on a weekly basis, directly to the church itself, using only scriptural methods and principles.
- X. Immediately upon a person's reception into the membership of the church a representative of the Finance Committee should fully explain the church's financial plan to the new member, secure his subscription on a weekly basis for both the current budget and the benevolence budget. It is a serious error, and a disservice to the new member, to wait until the time of the regular canvass some time later.

STEWARDSHIP MATERIALS AVAILABLE TO THE LOCAL CHURCH FROM THE MISSIONS COUNCIL

Because, by William H. Boddy—a small Stewardship folder for pew distribution and mailing. Free

I've Wanted to Know. The principal folder for 1952-1953. Under the sub-title, "A Layman Asks His Minister," this folder answers four major questions concerning the member's obligation to his church and its work and especially his part in the support of Our Christian World Mission. Free

One Man's Answer, by Frank L. Edwards—answers the question, "Why Do You Give?" Suggests basic motives for giving. Free

Stewardship Facts 1952-1953—a 64-page resource manual giving illustrations, poems, worship suggestions, quotes, humorous stories, practical techniques—National Council of Churches publication. 30 cents

Commit Thy Way—Stewardship materials—worship services, programs and plays for use in women's meetings—United Stewardship Council publication. 10 cents

The Grace of Giving, by Elise B. Wilson—a wife and mother tells how the practice of Stewardship in the home enriches the life of the whole family. Free

How Far Can You Reach, by Grace Storms—a children's folder illustrating and describing the work of our churches and their children with the boys and girls of other lands through Our Christian World Mission. Free

1952-1953 Work Kit for a Successful Every Member Canvass. Free

A Conversation Piece. For use of canvassers only. A graphically illustrated tool portraying the local church and its part in Our Christian Word Missions, from which the canvasser conducts his interview. Free

The Fine Art of Giving, by Charles R. Brown—a United Canvass edition. 2 cents

How Much Shall I Subscribe to My Church—How Much Ought I to Give? Free

To Own is to Owe, by Walter H. Judd—for pew distribution. Free

A Stewardship Interview, by William Howard Kryder. For pew distribution. A minister is visited by a sincere church member who asks some questions about his "money" responsibility to his church. Free

We Tithe . . . Will You? by Stanbery J. Nichols—personal tithing testimonies. (limited quantity) Free

You Are Invited—an enrollment card for the Fellowship of Tithers. Free

12-Point Standard for Missions in the Local Church—a 16-page guide for the Missionary Education Committee of the church.

(discount on quantity) 15 cents

On Living a Long Time—Annuities, Bequests, Conditional Gifts, Memorials, Wills—for the use of potential donors, attorneys and trust officers. Free

Further resource material in the form of books, pamphlets, leaflets, plays, skits, etc., are listed in the—

Stewardship Bibliography and Audio-Visual Aids—aids to a program of Stewardship in a local church, published by the Joint Department of Stewardship and Benevolence of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. and available from them or from your nearest Missions Council Office for five cents per copy.